

Text and photos by
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Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Despite the social constraints, the lack of opportunities and the limitations on working women in Jordan, three physically handicapped women have proven that there are no insurmountable problems in this society.

Not only were they able to find work, generate income and ensure economic self-sufficiency, but they also achieved a measure of social independence by living on their own. What they have established may well be a model for other women — handicapped or not.

Fawzieh, Maryam and Intisar first got together because they had to. "After spending a few years at a centre for the rehabilitation of the physically handicapped there was nowhere for us to go," says Fawzieh — nowhere where they could be productive, that is.

"Work opportunities for us are scarce, if any are found at all. Since we cannot find work to satisfy all of us, and since we do not want to be a burden on our families, we decided to live together and do whatever work we could find," Fawzieh says.

Fortunately for the three of them, Fawzieh is employed as a full-time teacher. She is the main bread earner to the house. Maryam and Intisar work at home. They knit and embroider and accept odd jobs from various factories.

It wasn't, however, without a big struggle that the three women managed to achieve what they have. "We faced a lot of opposition from our parents," says Fawzieh, who is 34. "Personally, I had to make arrangements and get a house while my parents were out of town." In October of last year, she and Maryam moved into the house at the Abu Nsir housing complex. Intisar joined them a few months later.

For Maryam, the beginning was even more difficult than it was for Fawzieh. "My parents would not hear of it at first — they thought it was not proper for

me to live independently. Besides, my father kept telling me that I wouldn't be able to manage alone," she said.

Fortune, Fawzieh believes, had a role in all of this. "If the opportunities were not presented to me, I could not have done what I did." But it required more than just luck for her to accomplish all that she has so far — it took a proper education and much determination.

Forced out of school

At her parents' insistence, and against her will, Fawzieh was forced to leave school at the age of 15. At 17 she fell off the stairs, broke her back and became paralysed from the hips down.

"For three years my parents and the doctors kept telling me that sleeping on my back for a while would make me better. It was all nonsense, but I did not realise what had happened. I did not know what breaking my back meant," she says.

It took Fawzieh almost 10 years to learn to live with her handicap and to do something about it. When she did, she started by learning some skills. She took a typing course and worked as a secretary. But because she did not have a high school degree her low salary did not get her anywhere.

"I decided to take up the challenge and go back to school. I did it almost out of revenge against my parents, who made me quit while I was young," she says.

With financial assistance from the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) and a scholarship from a local community college, she completed her education, and was able to take the next step forward. She is now a full-time teacher on loan from the Ministry of Education, working at Al Hussein Society for the Physically Handicapped, where she spent several years in rehabilitation.

Fawzieh looks back at her experience with a positive tone: "It



The 'three Mousquaires' at their apartment in the Abu Nsir housing district

'Three for one, and one for all'

was difficult at first; I had a lot of questions and doubts. But now all the problems are solved." She adds that her independence "helped us a great deal in getting started." It enabled her to buy a house for the three to live in. Every month, she pays more than half of her salary as instalments for the house.

In this sense, Fawzieh is a role model, and it is perhaps her success that has led so many others, Maryam and Intisar included, to follow her example.

For although Maryam's background and case are different, in so many ways she hopes to follow Fawzieh's footsteps, and certainly looks to her for guidance.

Maryam was three years old when she was struck by polio. She had not had her immunisation shot — both legs and her left arm were affected. Because of her disability, her parents never sent her to school. "The only thing they thought about was treating me. They never thought of educating me," she says.

"When I was 13 I went to a centre for the handicapped and took literacy classes there. But it was very difficult and unpleasant. I was young and gave up easily. Now I regret it," she adds.

As she became older, Maryam came to realise that people can tolerate much more than what she had been through. I saw a lot of handicapped people doing

great things for themselves, and this is what motivated me to do something for myself as well," she says.

Right now and at home, Maryam is making use of the skills she acquired during the rehabilitation stage. With a smile, she recalls: "I hated sewing, but I had to learn it because I had no alternative — I had no education."

It is precisely for that reason that Maryam has not looked for employment opportunities outside the house. "I received no education when I was young, but when I grew up I wanted to learn; the problem was that there were no opportunities for me. Without an education I feel I could do nothing worthwhile," she adds.

But she does not intend to give up. With Fawzieh's encouragement, Maryam is now completing

her second year of literacy classes, which in June should bring her to fourth grade level.

'A step at a time'

She plans to go on and compete in the work market as soon as she finishes her education. "I will do it a step at a time. I have already started by learning to read. Eventually, I want to have a permanent job. I want the security," she insists. But until she

does, she will continue to work at home.

Fawzieh asserts that the whole concept stemmed out of a need. "Our condition as physically handicapped is what brought us together," she says. But the idea does not stop here. Since she believes that it is difficult for the handicapped to find employment opportunities, the solution in her view is for the handicapped to create opportunities for themselves out of what they have learned and acquired — to create

work that would generate income.

"During the rehabilitation stage we were taught to be independent. This is the exact situation that we want to develop," Fawzieh says. Having work delivered to them at home is a suitable arrangement which, they believe, does not prevent them from being a part of society.

Previously, a plastics company used to deliver rolls of plastic sheets to them; they cut them into smaller pieces and earned 500 fils for every kilogramme. Right now, the three women have an understanding with a company that delivers plastic diaper pieces to them; they separate the pieces from one another and fold them individually. Every box of 3,000 pieces earns them JD 6.

Maryam and Intisar also use their skills for embroidery, sewing, knitting and woodwork. They are often assisted by Fawzieh. But for the three of them, the work of factories is more important because it brings them more income. The problem with handicraft work remains one of marketing. So far, they have sold their products at two bazaars — hardly a solid and stable enough outlet for their products, they believe. The third bazaar will be held on March 28 at the Faraj Rehabilitation Centre of King Hussein Medical City.

As far as the marketing problem is concerned, Fawzieh says "it would be very nice if a shop-owner, for example, buys all the knit-wear we produce and markets it alone." This sort of arrangement would be very suitable for them because as long as they are working actively they guarantee a steady income.

The three women have come a long way. The rehabilitation they got at Al Hussein Society for the Physically Handicapped was the first step towards independence.

Undoubtedly, they will face more challenges in the future. But despite all the factors working against them, they have set the precedent for others: They have proven that handicapped women can make it in this society, if they have the force of character and determination to do so.



Intisar hanging the laundry



Maryam making coffee



Fawzieh embroidering

TV & RADIO

WHAT'S GOING ON

FOR THE TRAVELLER

USEFUL TELEPHONE NOS.

<div>JORDAN TELEVISION</div> <div>Tel: 773111-19</div> <div>PROGRAMME ONE</div> <div>15:30 Koran</div> <div>15:50 Al Mawakeel (children's educational programme)</div> <div>16:20 Special programmes on Islamic countries</div> <div>17:00 Opening of OIC Foreign Ministers Meeting</div> <div>20:00 News in Arabic</div> <div>21:30 Arabic Series</div> <div>22:30 Special programmes</div> <div>23:00 News Summary</div> <div>PROGRAMME TWO</div> <div>18:00 Pespaco: A documentary about cinema in African countries</div> <div>18:30 News in French</div> <div>19:00 News in French</div> <div>19:15 Weekly Sport magazine (French)</div> <div>19:30 News in Hebrew</div> <div>20:00 News in Arabic</div> <div>20:30 Are You Being Served?</div> <div>21:10 Vanity Fair (New classic drama series)</div> <div>22:00 News in English</div> <div>22:30 Feature film: "A Fight for Jenny"</div> <div>RADIO JORDAN</div> <div>855 KHz, AM & 99 MHz, FM & partly on 9580 KHz, SW</div> <div>Tel: 774111-19</div> <div>07:00 Light Music</div> <div>07:30 Newsdesk</div> <div>08:00 Morning Show</div> <div>08:30 News Summary</div> <div>09:00 Just a Minute</div> <div>11:00 My Music</div> <div>11:30 Readings</div> <div>12:00 News Summary</div> <div>12:45 Pop Session</div> <div>13:00 News Summary</div> <div>13:05 Pop Session Contd.</div> <div>14:00 News Bulletin</div> <div>14:30 Special Feature</div> <div>15:00 Concert Hour</div> <div>16:00 News Summary</div> <div>16:05 Instrumentals</div> <div>16:30 Old Favourites</div> <div>17:00 Young Sound</div> <div>17:30 Pop Session</div> <div>18:00 News Summary</div> <div>18:05 Sports Roundup</div> <div>18:30 Music</div> <div>19:00 News Desk</div> <div>19:30 Date with a Star</div> <div>20:00 Evening Show</div> <div>21:00 News Summary</div> <div>21:05 Evening Show Contd.</div> <div>22:00 News Summary</div> <div>22:05 Evening Show Continued</div> <div>23:00 News Summary</div> <div>23:05 Evening Show Continued</div> <div>24:00 Close Down</div>	<div>BBC WORLD SERVICE</div> <div>639, 720, 1523 KHz</div> <div>06:00 Newsdesk 06:30 Augustus Carp Esq. By Himself 06:45 Reflections 06:50 Waveguide 07:00 World News 07:05 24 Hours: News Summary 07:30 Nature Notebook 07:45 Recording of the Week 08:00 Newsdesk 08:30 Six Cities 09:00 World News 09:20 24 Hours: News Summary 09:30 The Desert Diary 10:00 World News 10:05 Reflections 10:15 Augustus Carp Esq. By Himself 10:30 Anything Goes 11:00 World News 11:05 British Press Review 11:15 Good Books 11:30 Financial News: Sports Roundup 11:45 Peetle's Choice 12:00 News Summary: Six Cities 12:30 The Vintage Chart Show 13:00 World News 13:05 News About Britain 13:15 Health Matters 13:30 Allum Time 14:00 Radio Newsweek 14:15 Just a Minute 14:45 Sports Roundup 15:00 World News 15:05 24 Hours: News Summary 15:30 Anything Goes 16:00 News: Outlook 16:45 Carvery Row 17:00 Radio Newsweek 17:15 Six Cities 17:45 Capriccio 18:00 World News 18:05 Commentary 18:15 On the Border 18:30 Choir Reaction 18:45 The World Today 19:00 World News 19:05 Book Choice 19:15 Best on Record 19:45 Sports Roundup 20:00 Newsdesk 20:30 Multitrack 1: Top Twenty 21:00 News Summary: Outlook 21:30 Stockmarket Report 21:45 Peetle's Choice 22:00 World News 22:05 Twenty-Fours: News Summary 22:30 Sports International 23:00 News Summary: Network UK 23:15 The Unclaimed Promise 23:30 Vintage Chart Show 24:00 World News 00:05 The World Today 00:25 Book Choice 00:30 Financial News 00:40 Reflections 00:45 Sports Roundup 01:00 World News 01:05 Commentary 01:15 A Hobby — or a Way of Life? 01:30 Multitrack 1: Top 20</div> <div>VOICE OF AMERICA</div> <div>MW 1260 & SW 7200, 9565, 11740, 11925 and 15210 Hz</div> <div>06:00 News 06:10 Newsline 06:30 VOA Morning 07:00 News 07:10 Newsline 07:30 VOA Morning 10:00 News 10:10 Newsline 10:30 Music USA 17:00 News 17:10 Focus 17:30 Special English News & Features 18:00 News 18:10 Newsline 18:30 Magazine Show 19:00 News 19:10 Focus 19:30 Special English News & Features 20:00 News 20:10 Newsline America 20:30 Music USA 21:00 News & Editorial 21:15 Music USA Jazz 22:00 News 22:10 World Report</div>	<div>TODAY'S EVENTS</div> <div>EXHIBITIONS</div> <div>★ An art exhibition by Olivia Pallard at Alia Art Gallery (until March 28).</div> <div>★ Book exhibition at the Comprehensive Commercial Centre (Tower Building), Jabal Amman, 3rd Circle (permanent).</div> <div>★ "Fifth Caricature Exhibition," works of the late Najji Al Ali at Hussein Camp Youth Activities Centre.</div> <div>★ General book exhibition at the Professional Associations Complex in Shmeisani.</div> <div>★ An exhibition entitled "Reconstruction of Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock" at King Abdullah Ibn Al Hussein Mosque.</div> <div>★ Book exhibition at the University of Jordan's Faculty of Arts.</div> <div>★ Art exhibition by Samia Zarour at the Jordan National Museum of Fine Arts (until end of March).</div> <div>★ An exhibition entitled "Palestinian Uprising" at Lubabeh Bint Al Harish School, Jerash (runs through March 22).</div> <div>★ An agricultural exhibition at the University of Jordan, Faculty of Agriculture (runs through 23 March).</div> <div>★ Art exhibition by Mohammad Bouls and Mounira Al Tounsi at the Housing Bank Gallery (runs through April 19).</div> <div>LECTURES</div> <div>★ "How Privatization Works," by Dr. Sherry Stephenson of the OECD Trade Department at 10:00 a.m. at American Centre.</div> <div>★ Developments of the Arab Cause, by Abdul Hadi Bouteleh at 6:30 p.m. at Jordan Intercontinental Hotel.</div> <div>★ Le charme discret de la bourgeoisie at 8:00 p.m. at the French Cultural Centre.</div>	<div>DRAWING WORKSHOP</div> <div>★ Drawing Workshop (Atelier De Peinture) 10:00 - 12:00 noon at the French Cultural Centre (runs through March 24).</div> <div>BRITISH COUNCIL</div> <div>★ Tribute to David Hockney Grimm's Fairy Tales from 1820 a.s. to 10 p.m. at the British Council (runs through Sunday 27 March).</div> <div>SERVICE CLUBS</div> <div>The Amman Lions Club. Meetings every first and third Wednesday at the Regency Palace Hotel. 7:30 p.m.</div> <div>Bass Philadelphi Club. Meetings every second and fourth Wednesday at the Ammon Hotel. 7:30 p.m.</div> <div>CHURCHES</div> <div>St. Joseph Church (Roman Catholic) Jabal Amman. Tel. 624590.</div> <div>Church of the Annunciation (Roman Catholic) Jabal Luweibdeh. Tel. 637440.</div> <div>De la Salle Church (Roman Catholic) Jabal Hussein. Tel. 661577.</div> <div>Terranova Church (Roman Catholic). Jabal Luweibdeh, mass in Italian language, meet every Saturday at 5:30 p.m. Tel. 622565.</div> <div>Church of the Annunciation (Greek Orthodox) Abdeh. Tel. 623541.</div> <div>Anglican Church (Church of the Redeemer) Jabal Amman. Tel. 625383, chaplain's residence tel. 601359.</div> <div>Armenian Catholic Church Astrafieh. Tel. 771531.</div> <div>Armenian Orthodox Church Ashrafieh. Tel. 775261.</div> <div>St. Ephraim Church (Syrian Orthodox) Ashrafieh. Tel. 771751.</div> <div>Amman International Church (Interdenominational): meets at Southern Baptist School in Shmeisani. Tel. 677334.</div> <div>Evangelical Lutheran Church (Church of the Good Shepherd) Amman. Arabic Service: Sunday 7 p.m. Rev. N. Smir 811285.</div> <div>Good Shepherd Congregation (meets at the Good Shepherd Church) Interdenominational-ecumenical- Evangelical Service: Saturday 6:30 p.m. Tel. 822605. Rev. Veluri.</div> <div>The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon) Tel. 815877, 821294.</div>	<div>QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT</div> <div>This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08) 53200-5, where it should always be verified.</div> <div>ARRIVALS</div> <div>ROYAL JORDANIAN FLIGHTS (Terminal 1)</div> <div>09:15 Aqaba (RJ)</div> <div>09:20 Laraca (RJ)</div> <div>09:30 Cairo (RJ)</div> <div>09:30 Damascus (RJ)</div> <div>09:30 Muscat, Dubai (RJ)</div> <div>09:30 Kuwait (RJ)</div> <div>09:50 Dhahran (RJ)</div> <div>09:55 Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (RJ)</div> <div>10:00 Sana'a, Jeddah (RJ)</div> <div>10:45 Cairo (RJ)</div> <div>17:25 New York, Vienna (RJ)</div> <div>17:55 Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)</div> <div>18:45 Bangkok (RJ)</div> <div>23:55 Baghdad (RJ)</div> <div>OTHER FLIGHTS (Terminal 2)</div> <div>09:20 Sana'a (LH)</div> <div>11:00 Baghdad (LA)</div> <div>09:35 Cairo (MS)</div> <div>12:00 Muscat, Bahrain (GF)</div> <div>13:40 Kuwait (RJ)</div> <div>18:25 Beirut (ME)</div> <div>20:45 Vienna (IA)</div> <div>00:30 Baghdad (AF)</div> <div>DEPARTURES</div> <div>ROYAL JORDANIAN FLIGHTS (Terminal 1)</div> <div>07:00 Aqaba (RJ)</div> <div>11:00 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)</div> <div>11:20 Beirut (MEA)</div> <div>11:45 Vienna, Chicago, Los Angeles (RJ)</div> <div>(RJ)</div> <div>12:15 Frankfurt, Copenhagen (RJ)</div> <div>12:30 Cairo (RJ)</div> <div>19:00 Jeddah (RJ)</div> <div>19:30 Kuwait (RJ)</div> <div>19:30 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)</div> <div>19:35 Baghdad (RJ)</div> <div>20:15 Beirut (ME)</div> <div>20:45 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)</div> <div>OTHER FLIGHTS (Terminal 2)</div> <div>06:30 Cairo, London (BA)</div> <div>06:30 Beirut (MEA)</div> <div>10:10 Frankfurt (LH)</div> <div>18:20 Cairo (MS)</div> <div>12:00 Vienna (IA)</div> <div>13:45 Bahrain (GF)</div>	<div>15:00 Kuwait (KU)</div> <div>21:30 Baghdad (IA)</div> <div>01:30 Paris (AF)</div> <div>PRAYER TIMES</div> <div>06:14 Fajr</div> <div>07:32 (Sunrise) Dhuhr</div> <div>11:43 Dhuhr</div> <div>15:11 'Asr</div> <div>17:53 Maghrib</div> <div>19:11 Isha</div> <div>MONEY EXCHANGE</div> <div>Sunday rates</div> <div>Local sell/buy rates in fils</div> <div>Belgian franc 94.9 / 96.4</div> <div>Dutch guilder 176.7 / 179.5</div> <div>French franc 58.5 / 59.4</div> <div>Italian lira 26.3 / 27.3</div> <div>Japanese yen (for 100) 262.5 / 267.8</div> <div>Swedish crown 56.3 / 57</div> <div>Swiss franc 239.1 / 243.6</div> <div>U.S. sterling pound 612.7 / 623.9</div> <div>U.S. dollar 356.3 / 361.4</div> <div>W. German mark 198.3 / 201.8</div> <div>WEATHER</div> <div>Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.</div> <div>It will be partly cloudy to cloudy with chances of scattered thunder showers and north-westerly moderate freshening winds. In Aqaba, it will be cloudy with chances of scattered rains. The winds will be southerly and calm seas.</div> <div>Min./max. temp.</div> <div>Amman 5 / 11</div> <div>Aqaba 12 / 22</div> <div>Deserts 6 / 13</div> <div>Jordan Valley 10 / 17</div> <div>Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 10, Aqaba 26. Humidity readings: Amman 94 per cent, Aqaba 32 per cent.</div>	<div>EMERGENCIES</div> <div>Amman governorate 891228</div> <div>Amman Civil Defence 198, 199</div> <div>Civil Defence Irbid 271293, 273131</div> <div>Civil Defence Qweisameh 770733</div> <div>Civil Defence Deir Alla 57306</div> <div>Ambulance 193, 775111</div> <div>Amman downtown fire brigade 198</div> <div>First aid 630341</div> <div>Blood Bank 778303</div> <div>Civil Defence rescue 661111</div> <div>Fire headquarters 622090-3</div> <div>Police rescue 621111, 637777</div> <div>Police headquarters 639141</div> <div>Traffic police 896390/1</div> <div>Electric Power Co. 636381/4, 624881</div> <div>Municipal water complaints 771256</div> <div>Queen Alia Intl. Airport (08)5333060</div> <div>NIGHT DUTY</div> <div>AMMAN:</div> <div>Dr. Ali Asaad 897919</div> <div>Dr. Abdul Wahab Awad 846070</div> <div>Dr. Bassam Al-Snadi 896778</div> <div>Dr. Issam Abu Riza 611784</div> <div>Fawzieh pharmacy 661912</div> <div>Ferdows pharmacy 778334</div> <div>Al Asena pharmacy 637055</div> <div>Nairokh pharmacy 623672</div> <div>Al Salam pharmacy 636730</div> <div>Yacoub pharmacy 644945</div> <div>Shmeisani pharmacy 637660</div> <div>TAKES:</div> <div>Sa'id taxi 898434</div> <div>Baddawi taxi 792511</div> <div>Aqabawi taxi 892930</div> <div>Kayali taxi 786330</div> <div>Tyad taxi 740317</div> <div>Mu'iri taxi 892364</div> <div>IRBID:</div> <div>Dr. Fadi Al-Jour (-)</div> <div>Sharaa pharmacy 275825</div> <div>ZARQA:</div> <div>Dr. Ghassan Al-Faqih 986871</div> <div>Khalifah pharmacy 985417</div> <div>GENERAL</div> <div>Jordan Television 773111/19</div> <div>Radio Jordan 774111/19</div> <div>Ministry of Tourism 642211</div> <div>Hotel complaints 66412</div> <div>Price complaints 66176</div> <div>Telephone information 13</div> <div>Jordan and Middle East calls 10</div> <div>Overseas calls 17</div> <div>Repair service 11</div>
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ADC seeks details of Shamir's terrorist background and to put him on 'watch list'

WASHINGTON (J.T.) — The American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) has sued five U.S. government agencies seeking access to documents pertaining to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's involvement in terrorist activities as part of the infamous Stern Gang.

In a letter dated March 10 and addressed to Attorney General Edwin Meese, ADC further requested that Shamir be placed on the border watch list in his capacity as a private citizen.

Following is the text of the letter:

By virtue of the authority vested in you as attorney general we respectfully request that you place the name of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir (a.k.a. Yitzhak Yezemitsky) on the border "watch list" and order him excludable in his personal capacity from entering the United States pursuant to Section 212 of the Immigration and Naturalization Act.

The basis for this request rests on the long history and involvement of Shamir as a leader of

the infamous Stern Gang (LEHI organisation) which was responsible for numerous acts of terrorism including:

1. The Aug. 8, 1944 attempted assassination of British High Commissioner Sir Harold MacMichael in Tel Aviv;

2. The Nov. 6, 1944 attempted assassination of the British Minister Resident in the Middle East, Lord Moyne (Sir Walter Guinness in Cairo, Egypt);

3. The April 9, 1948 massacre of 254 unarmed civilians at the Arab village of Deir Yassin; and,

4. The Sept. 17, 1948 murder of United Nations mediator Count Folke Bernadotte in Jerusalem.

Given the established precedent decisions by the United States government, including recent actions by your office, we are confident that you will apply the same standards in this case, especially given the proven and heinous nature of the crimes involved.



An Israeli soldier pulls a Palestinian girl under arrest in Ramallah as she holds onto the uniform of a second soldier (right). The soldier at right hits an elderly Palestinian woman with his club as she attempts to pull the girl away. The girl was arrested after a stone-throwing demonstration.

Palestinian activists go hiding

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Several Palestinian activists, fearing further arrests under a widening crackdown against the uprising in the occupied territories, are sleeping away from their homes, Palestinian sources say.

At least 100 Palestinians have been seized during the past 72 hours in night swoops by Israeli troops intent on ending the upris-

ing, now in its fourth month. Military authorities in the occupied territories have stepped up measures aimed at preventing widespread protests on two key anniversaries this month.

Israeli Radio has reported that 200 Palestinians held in a Gaza prison camp have been moved to a jail in the Nagab desert to make more room at the Gaza facility.

The uprising's clandestine leadership has declared Monday a day of "fierce confrontation" with Israeli forces to mark the 20th anniversary of an Israeli raid on Palestinians at Al Karameh.

Israeli forces also expect protests on Land Day, the March 30 anniversary of the deaths of six Arabs in a 1976 demonstration against land confiscation.

PLO mission hopes to win time at U.N.

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), under U.S. orders to shut its U.N. mission Monday, hopes to delay the closure through legal manoeuvres, Arab officials said Sunday.

U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar, who protested that the order violated a signed agreement between the world body and the United States, has been urged by opponents of the closure to raise the matter in the U.S. federal court.

But Clovis Maksoud, U.N. representative of the Arab League, said a likelihood of success was an appeal by the PLO's lawyers for federal court jurisdiction in the dispute. He told reporters this might win a 20-day suspension of the closure.

An injunction could then be sought to stay further the enforcement of the 1987 U.S. "anti-terrorism" act, under which the Justice Department has been directed to close the mission by March 21.

Ramsey Clark, a former U.S. attorney general, is advising the PLO, Maksoud said.

The General Assembly, due to resume an emergency debate on the question Monday, is expected to adopt a resolution criticising the United States for showing disrespect for the 1947 accord that established U.N. headquarters in New York.

American authorities then undertook to facilitate the entry and functioning of those invited by the United Nations to take part in its work.

The PLO to set up a U.N. mission in 1974. It was never granted diplomatic immunity.

U.S. delegate Herbert Okun, announcing that the mission must close, said the order was irrespective of U.S. obligations to the United Nations.

Perez de Cuellar has proposed binding arbitration, but Okun said that would not be useful. The World Court has been asked to rule whether arbitration is mandatory under the headquarters agreement, but a decision could take weeks.

The dispute has worsened the uneasy relations between the United Nations and its host country. The U.S. Congress has withheld more than \$200 million in U.N. funding despite changes in U.N. budgeting designed to meet its demands.

Some U.N. diplomats, eager to make a dramatic reprisal gesture, have suggested holding a General Assembly session in Geneva or Vienna.

Others said this might exacerbate the crisis, predicting that the United States would boycott such a session and the Congress would then be even more reluctant to loosen its purse strings.

Senior U.N. officials said the world body could not afford the heavy expense of leaving New York.

Maghreb pact anniversary passes without Libya

TUNIS (R) — The fifth anniversary of a Maghreb pact seen by its three signatories as a step towards a wider regional power bloc slipped by Saturday without the hoped-for membership by Libya.

Algeria, which signed the non-aggression treaty with Tunisia and Mauritania in 1983, had campaigned strenuously in the past few months to woo Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi into joining the treaty.

After widespread press speculation about a four-nation Maghreb summit marking the pact, the anniversary was contrastingly low key.

Even plans for a meeting involving existing member states fell through.

Mauritanian President Maouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, who was to have joined Tunisian President Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali, and the number two in Algeria's ruling party, Mohammed Cherif Messaouda, abruptly put off a visit to Tunis this week.

No reason was given. Qadhafi's insistence on doing away with national frontiers as a last-minute public condition for joining the treaty provided one major obstacle to widening the pact.

Tunisian government officials made clear this and other Libyan conditions would have to be studied in depth as the pact is based on respect for national borders and sovereignty.

Tunisia's stand prompted speculation that it was trying to mediate between Algeria and Morocco over the 12-year-old Western Sahara war, in which Algerians-backed Polisario guerrillas are fighting for the independence of the territory from Rabat.

But a senior Foreign Ministry official in Tunis cautioned: "We do not think we are acting as mediators... there is no technical mediation."

He told Reuters that Tunis was simply making constant efforts to reconcile the two neighbours and stressed that United Nations efforts were continuing to try to reach a settlement on the future of the Western Sahara.

Algeria acknowledged that the Western Sahara conflict was an obstacle to widening the 1983 treaty in a commentary published this week by the official APS news agency.

But it raised a new issue, alleging that "the existence of foreign military bases on Moroccan territory" also presented a problem. Morocco denies there are any bases.

The pact is also seen as a basis for greater economic cooperation, in the form of a common market, among members.

The treaty, signed March 19, 1983 in Tunis, came after Tunisia accused Libya of training Tunisian rebel commandos who came via Algeria to stage a bloody raid on the southern Tunisian mining town of Gafsa in 1980.

Continued from page one

King meets Habib, Abdul Meguid

(Continued from page 1)

Jordan's formal reply to the U.S. peace plan to Habib.

"It's still too early," the official told Reuters.

Habib arrived from Cairo where he discussed the U.S. initiative with Mubarak.

"There are very clear time factors involved and we are pursuing it with all the attention and seriousness that the problem of making peace in this part of the world deserves," Habib told reporters.

The U.S. proposals call for an international conference next month, but Habib indicated no dates had been fixed. "I am not going to predict a particular event happening at particular moments," he said after an hour of talks with Mubarak.

Habib was also due to visit Saudi Arabia and Morocco.

Habib said in Cairo that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, who discussed the peace plan in Washington last week, had not rejected it, as his public comments often appear to indicate. "Shamir did not say no," he said, recalling a remark by Reagan that any leader who turned down the U.S. ideas would have to answer to his own people.

Habib also echoed statements by Reagan and Shultz that the peace proposals would not be "cut up into pieces" and remained unchanged.

"We are pursuing them with vigour and with careful consultations with our friends, and with the understanding that this is an ongoing process," he said.

Shamir has 'peace' idea

In New York, Shamir said he had a peace proposal that would satisfy both Palestinian and Israeli concerns but held out for direct peace talks with the Arabs rather than an international peace conference.

"I'm sure that there is a position that could satisfy the Palestinians and not be contradictory to Israeli convictions," Shamir said in a television interview recorded Saturday and broadcast Sunday. "Let us go to negotiations," Shamir said when asked what his plan was.

Asked if he had a specific proposal in mind, Shamir said: "I have, I have."

Eban favours int'l talks

In Brussels, former Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban Sunday urged an international conference on the future of the occupied territories and said their present status was untenable.

He told an international forum arranged by a Brussels Jewish group: "We all want peace, we all want a degree of mutual recognition and we all regard the status quo as untenable and intoler-

OIC conference opens today

(Continued from page 1)

none at all."

The PLO delegation to the meeting is headed by Farouq Kaddoumi, head of the PLO's Political Affairs Department.

According to Arab diplomats quoted by Reuters, OIC foreign ministers will unite in condemning Israel for its handling of the uprising in which over 100 Palestinians have died, and will pledge money for the uprising.

They said the OIC would also endorse the idea of an international U.N.-sponsored conference to work out a just and comprehensive settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The Iran-Iraq war, in which the combatants — both OIC members — have rained missiles on each other's capitals for the past three weeks, may once again prove an intractable issue.

Iran, which boycotted last year's OIC summit in Kuwait, has sent a delegation headed by Sheikh Mohammad Ali Al Tashkiri, an official at the Islamic Guidance (Information) Ministry.

It was not known whether the OIC would revive a mediation committee which has tried several times to make peace between Tehran and Baghdad.

Conference sources told Reuters the Iranian and Iraqi delegations clashed at a preparatory session Saturday, when Iraq proposed that the OIC discuss reports of emigration by Iranian Jews to Israel via Pakistan.

Arab diplomats said Iran would also resist any move by Saudi Arabia to secure a resolution condemning last July's violence involving Iranian pilgrims in the Holy City of Mecca.

Afghanistan's OIC seat will be empty. Its membership was suspended after Soviet troops inter-

Mujahedeen seek recognition

(Continued from page 1)

envoy Mikhail Sytenko in Amman Saturday. The King also received OIC Secretary-General Sharifuddin Pirzada to discuss a resolution welcoming Moscow's pledge to pull its troops out of

Afghanistan. Sytenko and Pirzada met separately to discuss what resolution might be adopted by the OIC, which has long demanded a Soviet withdrawal, conference sources said.

Israeli soldier shot dead

(Continued from page 1)

two Palestinians suspected of attacking alleged collaborators with Israel.

Arrest campaign

Troops in the occupied territories, condemned worldwide for using beatings and bullets, seized hundreds of Palestinians in three successive night swoops aimed at preventing protests on two key dates, Palestinians said.

vened in Kabul in 1979. Muslim minorities in Bulgaria and the Philippines will try to use the OIC conference as a platform to press their demands.

Mini-summit planned

Meanwhile, Kuwait announced Sunday that it planned to host a mini-summit of Islamic leaders in April to bolster backing of the Palestinians in the occupied territories.

Kuwaiti Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Rashed Abdul Aziz Al Rashed made the announcement after a weekly cabinet meeting and said Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah would host the meeting in his capacity as OIC chairman.

He said the meeting would be held April 10-11. It would group members of the OIC's permanent bureau — King Hassan II of Morocco, the presidents of Pakistan, Turkey, Senegal, Gabon and the Maldives, and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat.

"The meeting will review the performance of joint Islamic action in light of the resolutions of the 5th Islamic conference and means of overcoming obstacles hindering Islamic cooperation," Rashed said.

The last OIC summit was held in January 1987 in Kuwait.

An official source quoted by the AP said high on the agenda would be Islamic support of the "Palestinian people's endeavours to put an end to occupation of Al Aqsa."

The Islamic leaders also will try to speed up action to bring the Iran-Iraq war to an end, he added.

The sources noted that the summit was likely to be a follow-up to an emergency Arab summit expected to be held in early April, either in Algeria or Tunisia.

Baghdad stays calm amid 'war of cities'

Reuters

where unrelenting Iranian shelling has emptied many areas.

Impatience with war

BAGHDAD — Minutes after a missile hits, the rooftops of Baghdad fill with black-robed women and men in suits scanning the horizon for signs of smoke.

Birds shriek in frantic circles overhead. Telephone calls criss-cross the city as Baghdadis consult: How loud was it? Do you know where it fell? Is the family all right?

The deadly three-week-old "war of the cities" between Iran and Iraq puts much of this city of four million people on edge with each thud of a landing Iranian missile.

But the tension appears to vanish quickly and Baghdad reverts to a remarkable calm, toughened perhaps by 7½ years of war.

In delectable spring weather, lovers stroll along the banks of the Tigris, muddy and swollen after the heaviest rains in 30 years.

Soldiers, identifiable only by their close cropped hair, pour out of downtown cinemas on their weekend home leave.

Young Iraqi men not at home watching their national soccer team snatch the Gulf Arab Cup in Riyadh Friday play their own game in the wide grass fields of Zawra park.

"This is the way we live. There have been a number of rockets thrown at Baghdad but yet life is normal," Iraqi Oil Minister Issam Abdul Rahim Al Chalabi told Reuters.

"Things never change because we don't care. Birds possibly just for a few minutes fly hectically but life's normal everywhere."

Iran has rocketed Baghdad with some 30 missiles since Feb. 29 while Iraq has slammed around 100 into Tehran and other Iranian cities in an attempt to force Iran to accept a United Nations ceasefire call.

Tehran says more than 300 Iranians been killed and over 1,000 wounded in the cities war.

Iraq does not release casualty figures but Western diplomats there put total casualties at a low 50 dead or wounded. Baghdad residents too say most Iranian missiles land away from the centre, cutting the toll and contributing to the casual air.

"It's annoying to get jolted out of bed at night," said 20-year-old taxi driver Mahmoud. "But we're used to it now."

Residents say there have been only isolated cases of people fleeing to escape the danger, unlike the southern city of Basra

Baghdadis in many parts of the city express impatience with the war's duration but exude confidence. "The army is strong, morale is high. All Iraqis together are steadfast," said Fouad, a university student visiting friends in a bustling market near the historic Kazhemiyyah mosque.

Kazhemiyyah is the burial place of two imams of the Shi'ite sect and Iran has declared it safe from attack. Residents there say they sometimes do not even hear the bombardments which almost daily over the last three weeks have underlined to citizens elsewhere in the capital the closeness of war.

The arrival of spring eased the winter-long threat of a big new Iranian offensive against Basra, and in another month scorching heat will all but rule it out until November.

Western diplomats say Iran appears beset by internal issues and has had trouble mobilising enough men. Unprecedented diplomatic support abroad and a clear edge in the air-and missile-war have also boosted Iraqi morale.

"There is a confidence that wasn't there before," a diplomat said. "With its new missiles, Iraq has been able to equalise an advantage the Iranians previously had."

The missile factor

Diplomats and military analysts believe Iraq is firing Soviet Scud-B ground-to-ground missiles, modified with boosters to bring Tehran, 600 kilometres away, within range for the first time. Iran has said that malfunctioning missiles recovered in Tehran showed the warhead reduced to one-fifth of the design payload.

Iran has long been able to fire ordinary Scud-B's into Baghdad from the battlefield less than 160 kilometres to the east. But diplomats say the relatively slow pace of Iran's reprisals suggests it could be nearing the end of its stockpile.

Iran has stepped up shelling of border towns and poured more troops into battle on the northern front.

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Gulf Arab petrochemical producers to consider establishing joint fleet

BAHRAIN (R) — Gulf petrochemical producers will hold their first conference Monday to coordinate policies and study proposals to start a joint fleet to avoid high shipping fees, industry officials said.

"Shipping costs reached an unacceptable level and we are seriously studying setting up a company to transport our products," said Mustafa Al Sayed, general manager of the Bahrain-based Gulf Petrochemical Industries Company (GPIC).

Members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have spent billions of dollars building petrochemical industries and they are planning to expand. The seven-year-old GCC will hold the three-day meeting in Abu Dhabi to discuss production and marketing policies and proposals to start a joint fleet.

"The feeling is all around... we look at it from a commercial point of view, it is more economical for us to transport our

products," Al Sayed said. The economic and defence alliance includes Saudi Arabia which alone needs about 140 tankers to carry its 3.5-million-tonne annual production of petrochemicals.

Bahrain, another GCC member, exports 700,000 tonnes a year and needs a tanker a week to ship its products while Kuwait, yet another member of the grouping, manufactures over a million tonnes a year.

The GCC also includes Oman, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Qatar.

Al Sayed said there were different alternatives and the group is still exploring whether to purchase, charter or build their own tankers.

"Prices went up 50 per cent in the past year, why are the fees so high when there is an over supply of ships," he added.

Insurance and tanker fees are high for the Gulf where Iraq and Iran, at war since 1980, attack ships in the waterway.

One shipping expert said it would be more feasible for the GCC to set up a chartering company which could lease the tankers out when they are not in use.

Al Sayed said the petrochemical market was now stable after reaching a low point in December 1986. He anticipated a rise in demand, making it safe for the group to consider starting a fleet.

"It's an upward trend and it will continue to be so till 1992. We have a wide market and if we have our own ships we can put them to good and full use," he added.

The oil-rich GCC states have suffered from the swings in the oil market and see a future in ex-

panding their petrochemical industry.

The UAE has plans to enter the field of petrochemicals while Saudi Arabia is opening up its petrochemical industry to the private sector to further increase production.

GPIC, meanwhile, is involved in a \$20 million expansion plan to increase output by 20 per cent by the end of the year.

The GCC offers a competitive price for its petrochemicals in comparison to other producers and the group is involved in complex talks with the European Community (EC) to reach a free-trade accord between the two economic groups.

Some EC members are against the accord and fear it could lead to a flooding of their markets of cheap GCC petrochemicals harming European producers.

Community officials said last month an agreement could be reached by mid-1989.



Health Minister Zaid Hamzeh Sunday meets with the Finnish delegation

Tabbaa, Hamzeh receive Finnish economic group

AMMAN (Petra) — A 20-member Finnish economic delegation conferred here Sunday with Industry, Trade and Supply Minister Hamdi Tabbaa on economic and tourist cooperation between Finland and Jordan.

The head of the visiting delegation said that Finland will be willing to import Jordanian products and was interested in conducting feasibility studies on joint ventures.

He said that the delegation, which includes representatives of the private sector in Finland, will further discuss these issues with the Jordanian chambers of industry and trade.

The delegation leader also proposed that a joint Jordanian-Finnish committee be set up to discuss means of bolstering bilateral cooperation in economic and trade matters.

Tabbaa briefed the delegation on Jordan's development programmes and the facilities, exemptions and incentives offered to investors in the kingdom.

Tabbaa also said that Jordan would like to export its cement, phosphate and potash as well as fruit and vegetables to Finland.

The minister said that Jordan would welcome cooperation with Finland in various fields, especially in Finnish expertise in the timber industry which Jordan needs for its timber and wood factory in Aqaba.

Tabbaa also discussed with the delegation the prospect of increasing Finnish tourist group visits to Jordan.

The Finnish delegation also met with Health Minister Zaid Hamzeh and discussed with him bilateral cooperation in health-related fields.

Hamzeh briefed the visitors on his ministry's health and medical programmes and the primary health care project in the Kingdom.

The delegation members expressed readiness to launch Jordanian-Finnish cooperation in health fields and in providing Jordan with medical equipment.

The delegation members were later taken on a visit to the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) where they met Director General Mohammad Arafah and other senior officials.

The two sides reviewed areas for mutual cooperation in energy and electricity and the prospect of exploiting shale oil found in Jordan for generating electricity.

They also discussed the prospect of manufacturing electrical appliances in Jordan with Finnish expertise and carrying out electrical engineering projects in Africa and the Middle East.

The JEA recently awarded a tender to a Finnish company for providing transformer stations to be financed through a Finnish government's easy term loan.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

AMMAN (J.T.) — Turnover was low again Sunday as only 172,500 shares changed hands for a volume of JD 276,605 covered by 286 transactions.

The following six companies accounted for about 70 per cent of the volume: The National Steel Industries (JD 41,009 for 14,350 shares over 26 contracts); the Jordan Cement Factories (JD 33,981 for 31,283 shares over 24 contracts); the Arab Aluminium Industries (JD 32,181 for 17,600 shares over 35 contracts); the Arab Bank (JD 31,638 for 280 shares over six contracts); the Cairo Amman Bank (JD 30,000 for 1,000 shares over one contract) and the Intermediate Petrochemical Industries (JD 24,643 for 16,950 shares spread over 29 contracts).

The Universal Chemical Industries and the Aladdin Industries recorded a volume of JD 11,553 and JD 10,421 on shares totalling 6,850 and 7,650 respectively noting that the number of contracts was high at 30 and 20.

Prices were generally stable except for the Arab Bank, the Jordan French Insurance and the Universal Chemical Industries. The high and low price for each was JD 113,000-JD 112,750; JD 5,400-JD 5,300 and JD 1,730-JD 1,640.

Trading at the parallel market amounted to 41,593 shares for a value of JD 19,994.

A total of 1,004 development bonds changed hands for a total of JD 10,881.

NAF gives over JD 2 million in aid to 9,708 needy families

AMMAN (Petra) — National Aid Fund (NAF) Director Khalil Faouri said that during last year assistance totalling JD 2,139,344 was given to 9,708 needy families in Jordan.

He said that the NAF's resources were confined to the Jordanian treasury which offered the fund JD 2,193,950 in the same year. The NAF has been operating for only 18 months but its services have been reaching needy people around the country through the various centres in all regions, Faouri said.

Some families, he added, receive up to JD 40 a month in financial assistance and NAF also helps needy families to start their own businesses and generate their own income.

Agricultural workshop begins

AMMAN (Petra) — A training workshop for workers employed in the implementation of the Zarga River Basin development project was opened Saturday by Ministry of Agriculture's Secretary-General Salem Al Lawzi.

The project, being implemented in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme and Arab and foreign funds, is expected to cost JD 22 million, according to Lawzi who addressed the participants in the week-long workshop.

Lawzi said that the project is one of the biggest projects to be carried out by the Ministry of Agriculture and it will affect a total area of 820,000 dunums of land at the lower part of the river basin.

The workshop aims at preparing a working plan for the different technical teams carrying out the basic parts of the project.

Qudah lectures on free zones

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian Free Zones Corporation (JFZC) Assistant Director-General Fahad Qudah gave a lecture at the customs central office in Amman outlining the corporation's development and its objectives.

He also spoke about the exemptions from taxes and fees offered by the government to investments in the country and the role of the corporation in national development.

He said that a 1,500 dunum piece of land has been reserved along the sea shores of Aqaba to build the corporation's headquarters on it and to serve for JFZC main operations.

Department of education completes building school in Mafraq region

MAFRAQ (Petra) — The department of education in Mafraq governorate has completed the construction of a preparatory school for girls at Balama town at the cost of JD 247,000. The school houses 22 classrooms, a workshop, a library and a hall for training the girls in home science and for other activities.

The health ministry here has awarded a tender to a local construction company to set up new building for the health department at the cost of JD 97,000. It also awarded another tender to build an annex to the Mafraq hospital for JD 150,000.

Minister approves budgets, tender

AMMAN (Petra) — Municipal and Rural Affairs and Environment Minister Yousef Hamdan Ali Jaber has approved a JD 161,774 budget for the Masharee municipal council in the northern Jordan Valley region. The funds will finance road projects and land purchases.

Al Jaber has also approved a

JD 71,000 budget for Eima in Tafleeh district. The town's mayor Shawkat Rubelhat said that the funds will be spent on building "retaining" walls, roads and purchasing land for public utilities.

The minister has also approved a JD 248,688 tender for building and asphaltting roads in Zarqa.

Expert to lecture on privatisation

AMMAN (J.T.) — Dr. Sherry Stephenson of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Trade Department Monday lectures about "How Privatisation Works," according to a press release issued by the American Centre.

During her lecture, which will be held at the American Centre, Stephenson will speak about the economic benefits of privatisation and will address how potential drawbacks, such as unemployment and concentration of wealth, might be overcome.

U.S. stands firm against new funding for Inter-American Development Bank

CARACAS (R) — The Reagan administration made clear Sunday that it will oppose new funding for the Inter-American Development Bank until the agency agrees to profound changes in its lending procedures.

A brief statement by Allen Wallis, U.S. undersecretary of state for economic affairs, torpedoed any hope that the two-year-old funding dispute between the United States and the Latin American debtor countries would be resolved quickly.

"We will not change our position this year, next year or the year after," Wallis said as he arrived in Caracas for the bank's annual meeting, which opens formally Monday.

"It is not just the Treasury, the State Department, the White House. It is the entire administration that is absolutely firm in the position that the country is taking," he said.

In private and public state-

ments, however, top U.S. officials have appeared to hold out an olive branch, saying they favoured giving the bank's president-elect, Uruguayan Finance Minister Enrique Iglesias, a chance to discuss divisive issues with the Latin countries and then to arrange new funding talks.

Iglesias, who takes office formally on April 1, is considered a master mediator of long experience.

On his arrival Saturday for the meeting, attended by economic leaders from Latin America, Asia, the United States and Europe, Iglesias said: "I think this meeting in Caracas should pave the way for a new institution that unites us all."

He told Reuters: "We are very aware that this is a difficult moment but we are hopeful because we think all members of the bank want the same thing: A vigorous, active and efficient institution."

The Latin countries had hoped

that agreement for a \$23 billion refunding of the bank could be completed soon, allowing it to take a greater role in regional development.

The countries had agreed that the bank should earmark some funds for economic reform in the region, rather than have it all go on fundamental development such as roads, sewers and dams. But the United States has sought procedures that would give it more say over who receives loans and under what conditions.

The Reagan administration wants to see debtors do more to market-orient their economies, such as reducing subsidies.

Washington is increasingly preoccupied with economic and political issues in Latin America. The debt crisis has resisted easy solutions since it surfaced over five years ago.

To this has been added political upheaval in Panama and a con-

troversial decision by President Reagan to send 3,200 American troops to Honduras because of a reported border crossing by soldiers from Nicaragua.

The meeting of the bank's 44 member countries brings together over 2,000 officials from governments, commercial banks, investment firms and other international financial institutions. The formal session runs from Monday to Wednesday.

At a meeting of officials Saturday, the bank's number two, Michael Curtin, said he was prepared to stand down for James Conrow, an assistant secretary at the U.S. Treasury.

But Conrow, who has overseen the development banks at the Treasury, has been a harsh critic of the bank's activities and the U.S. decision to press for his nomination has angered some Latin countries and further divided the two sides.

Soviets register trade surplus with West

MOSCOW (R) — Soviet trade with the West was in the black in 1987 for the first time in three years, according to official figures published Saturday.

Data in the foreign trade jour-

nal Vneshtorgyaz Torgovlya showed a Soviet trade surplus with the developed industrial world of more than 312 million roubles (\$521 million).

There had been a deficit of 2.72 billion roubles (\$4.54 billion) in 1986.

Total trade turnover with the West in 1987 dropped by about

3.1 per cent compared with 1986, falling to 28.06 billion roubles (\$46.86 billion) from 28.96 billion roubles (\$48.36 billion).

The Soviet Union had been in the red with the West every year since 1984, when it ran a trade surplus of 1.7 billion roubles (\$2.82 billion), according to official figures.

Foreign analysts said the Soviet Union was apparently cutting back Western imports because of reduced revenues from the raw materials it exports, especially oil.

The journal said fuel energy exports to the West had fallen by 1.8 per cent compared with 1986, but gave no breakdown of figures.

Imports from Western countries in 1987 totalled 13.87 billion roubles (\$23.16 billion), a fall of 1.98 billion roubles (\$3.31 billion), or about 12.5 per cent compared with 1986, the figures showed.

Exports to the West totalled 14.18 billion roubles (\$23.68 billion), an increase of 1.08 billion roubles (\$1.80 billion), or about 8.2 per cent.

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Ortega calls Honduras 'tool' of U.S.

Honduran jets bomb Nicaraguan positions again

TEGUCIGALPA (Agencies) — Two Honduran warplanes bombed Nicaraguan positions Saturday afternoon in a rugged border area where Honduran President Jose Azcona Hoyo was reinforcing troops to oust the Sandinista soldiers.

The Nicaraguan Defence Ministry said the raid was on Nicaraguan territory and caused no damage. Azcona, in a telephone interview with the Associated Press, would neither confirm nor deny the attack, but the Honduran military said it occurred on the Honduran side of the ill-defined border.

In Managua, Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega dubbed Honduras a "tool" of U.S. policy after it made its second air raid in three days on Sandinista positions he said were inside the northern Nicaraguan border.

"Honduras is lending itself in an escalation of war as a tool of North American policy," Ortega told reporters after a meeting with opposition political parties.

Honduras says the Sandinistas crossed the frontier in the Bocay region last week in pursuit of U.S.-backed contra rebels. Thousands of U.S. troops have been sent to Honduras as a show of force, but officials say they will not be sent to combat areas.

Azcona threatened the Sandinistas Friday with air raids unless they pulled out of Honduras. Nicaragua has denied its troops crossed the border, but a Sandinista military official has indicated Nicaraguan troops entered Honduras.

The Honduran statement, issued by military intelligence late Saturday, said the raid was ordered by the Military High Command "with the objective of forcing the immediate withdrawal of the Nicaraguan troops from our soil."

The statement said two U.S.-made F-5 fighter jets carried out the raid but it gave no further details of the attack.

The Nicaraguan Defence Ministry statement issued in Managua said the raid was in the same area where Honduran jets dropped several bombs Thursday. Honduras has said that raid also was on its side of the border.

Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto sent a protest note to Honduran Foreign Minister Carlos Lopez, saying his government "energetically and formally protests" the attack, which it called "aggression against Nicaraguan territory."

The Nicaraguan Defence Ministry statement said two American-made F-5 jets staged a 10-minute attack Saturday afternoon in the Bocay area about 104 kilometres northeast of Managua, dropping four bombs against Sandinista army positions but causing no damage.

The ministry also said two F-5 warplanes flew over Sandinista positions Saturday morning in the frontier sectors of Mukuwas, San



Jose Azcona Hoyo
Andres De Bocay, Waniwas and Wayawas, but dropped no bombs.

There was no immediate comment by Honduras on the reported overflight.

Both incursions were repelled by Sandinista anti-aircraft fire, the ministry said.

More U.S. help

Azcona had announced he was sending more troops to the Bocay region and also said he would not hesitate to seek more U.S. help.

A few hours after Azcona made the statements and before

Nicaragua reported its territory was being bombed, the Honduran Armed Forces said the Nicaraguans were pulling back.

Azcona had said before the armed forces announced the Nicaraguans were withdrawing that the situation in the mountainous Bocay region deteriorated when Sandinista troops reentered Honduras after having retreated to the Nicaraguan side.

He estimated the Nicaraguan strength in Honduras at about 2,000 by Saturday morning.



Daniel Ortega

The president told the Associated Press he was reinforcing the 2,000 Honduran troops at the border with several more battalions.

A Honduran military intelligence officer, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Honduran troops surrounded the Sandinistas and were to shoot or capture any Nicaraguan soldiers found on the wrong side of the border.

About 3,200 U.S. troops have been sent to Honduras at the request of the Honduran government since Thursday.

Noriega rejects U.S. plan to solve crisis

PANAMA CITY (R) — Panamanian Military Strongman General Manuel Antonio Noriega, facing spreading popular calls for his removal, has rejected a U.S. plan to solve Panama's political crisis, according to an Armed Forces communiqué.

The statement from the Panama Defence Forces Saturday said Noriega met Friday with two U.S. State Department officials to discuss the proposal, which he dismissed as "unacceptable and anti-Panamanian."

However, Noriega left open the door to further talks with the U.S. officials which he said must "resolve national problems without conditions and take the interests of all Panamanians into account."

Reagan administration officials identified the two negotiators as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State William Walker and Michael Kozak, a department legal adviser.

The New York Times reported Sunday that Noriega had indicated to the U.S. officials that he would only step down if he could stay in Panama and choose his own successor as military leader, which the U.S. envoys said was unacceptable.

Noriega also demanded that Manuel Solis Palma, who was installed as Panamanian president by the legislature last month, be permitted to stay on for six months, when he proposed that presidential elections be held, the Times said.

Noriega was defiant. He hasn't come to grips with reality. He still thinks there is some way for him to stay," it quoted a State Department official as saying.

Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Elliot Abrams told the newspaper Noriega's response was "a disappointment... The only way this

crisis is going to end is when Noriega leaves. The question is whether he realises the seriousness of his situation in Panama."

Noriega, who commands the 16,000-strong defence forces, put down a coup attempt Wednesday by senior officers inside the military command headquarters in Panama City.

The Armed Forces afterwards announced a purge of the military high command, arresting five officers accused of instigating the aborted coup and forcibly retiring five more.

The coup attempt sparked a day of violent rioting by government workers and others clamouring for Noriega's removal. The government responded by putting army troops on street patrol. On Friday, it declared a state of emergency with a decree which could suspend a wide range of civil rights.

With the removal of seditious army officers, and troops in the streets to quell further public disturbances, Noriega appeared ready to ignore calls for his departure.

"Noriega is a pragmatist."

"Above all, Noriega is a pragmatist. He may see himself as being forced out, but I don't think he is quite ready to leave," one political observer said.

While Noriega appears to be firmly in control, he faces the prospect of more unrest with the opposition National Civic Crusade's call for a general strike beginning Monday.

Previous strike calls by the Crusade, a largely middle-class coalition of political parties and other organisations, have been unsuccessful at ousting Noriega.

However, the protests last week in Panama City were spearheaded by public employees angered with the government because they were unable to cash their pay cheques.

S. Korea opposition merger talks collapse

SEOUL (AP) — Last-minute efforts to unite the divided political opposition before next month's national assembly elections collapsed Sunday with rival parties trading harsh accusations.

Officials of the largest opposition group, the Renovation Democratic Party (RDP) controlled by Kim Young-Sam, called off the merger talks, citing violent demonstrations Saturday night by supporters of its opposition rival, the Party for Peace and Democracy (PPD).

Talks on integrating the opposition are no longer possible and meaningless because of violent acts deliberately committed by PPD members and their supporters," the RDP said in a statement.

Kim Dae-Jung's PPD rejected the accusations as "illogical."

Political sources said the two rival opposition parties were expected to officially call off the unification talks later Sunday, and no more talks are expected

before the elections. The dispute developed after violent protests by 250 PPD members and supporters who occupied the main lobby of a Seoul hotel where the merger talks were to have resumed Saturday night.

The protesters kicked and punched RDP negotiators, calling them "traitors" and "swindlers." A television cameraman was beaten and taken to a nearby hospital.

The RDP negotiators called off the talks but were barred from leaving the hotel until after midnight Friday. Another round of talks was called at a different hotel Sunday morning but RDP officials refused to attend.

The current merger talks were begun after Kim Dae-Jung resigned his post as chairman of the PPD Thursday, satisfying a key condition set by the RDP for uniting the opposition before the general elections.

28 reported killed in Burma riots

BANGKOK (R) — Up to 28 people have been killed in Rangoon this week in the worst riots in Burma since 1974, according to persistent reports reaching Bangkok.

The unconfirmed reports said troops armed with guns and batons stormed into the city Thursday to disperse thousands of protesting students at several campuses.

Rampaging residents and students smashed and set fire to government buildings but did not touch private property, travellers returning to Bangkok said Saturday.

Hundreds of demonstrators

were jailed and about 50 injured in unrest triggered by the shooting to death of a student in clashes with local youths last weekend, diplomats here said.

Witnesses said government trucks roamed the streets to announce a curfew and urge people to go home Friday night.

Sources Sunday said the situation in the city was still tense.

The unrest began with a brawl between students and local youths at the Rangoon Institute of Technology on March 12 but by Wednesday had turned into a widespread riot of students and residents against the government.

Karabakh leaders renew call for union

MOSCOW (AP) — Communist leaders in a disputed region of the Caucasus Mountains have retired the No. 2 party official and called again for union with Armenia.

The decisions of the party committee in the Nagorno-Karabakh autonomous region, part of Soviet Azerbaijan since 1923, were reported in the area's newspaper, a copy of which was obtained Saturday in Moscow.

The state-run press had earlier called efforts to unite the region with Armenia "extremist."

The actions showed that despite complaints from national

officials about their handling of the dispute, leaders of the region continued to call for joining the territorial enclave inside Azerbaijan to Armenia, a neighbouring Soviet republic.

Armenian nationalist Paruyr Ayrikyan told a news conference Saturday in Moscow that his countrypeople are divided about whether to proceed with a plan to demonstrate March 26 to underscore demands that Nagorno-Karabakh, whose population is more than three-quarters Armenian, be made part of Armenia.

Martin Luther King's old neighbourhood: A tragic example of worsening black poverty

By Sharon Cohen
The Associated Press

CHICAGO — Bonnet Hampton knows what it's like to huddle in bed with a baseball bat at hand, wondering how to protect her children from rats scurrying across the rotting wooden floor of her tenement flat.

She knows how to sidestep young men strung out on drugs huddled in dingy hallways, and she's no longer shocked by dead bodies — even at her doorstep. "You don't get used to it," she said, "but it's not a nightmare... You don't lose any rest over that."

Hampton lives in the North Lawndale section of Chicago, a one-time industrial city in the nation's Midwest with a large black population. A generation ago, American civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. lived in the neighbourhood in a four-room flat.

King went north to wage war on poverty and inequality. Twenty years after his assassination, slums and disparity remain. But so do dreams of a better life.

A bleak fact of life

Black poverty is a bleak fact of life in the United States. Nearly one in three blacks — 31.1 per cent — lived below the poverty line in 1986, compared with 11 per cent of whites, according to U.S. government statistics.

The poor black community King adopted has become even poorer — and that, say those who knew him, would grieve King if he were still alive.

"If King were to look at Lawndale... he'd think that his worst nightmare had come true," said Gary Orfield, a University of Chicago political science professor who did volunteer work with King.

Some residents reluctantly agree.

"I think he was great enough to know and powerful enough to know his dream is not being

fulfilled," said Cleodia Dawkins O'Quinn, who welcomed King to her home. "He would know we have stepped backward."

Twenty years ago, a major report on inner-city problems, highlighted by the riots of the mid-1960s, warned the United States was moving toward two societies, "one black, one white — separate and unequal."

Life for inner-city blacks has worsened, scholars said in a follow-up study this year, partly because of industrial decline. Over 35 years, cities which based their income on heavy industry have lost almost half their manufacturing force, according to a report by the University of Chicago's William Julius Wilson and Loic Wacquant.

Chicago, the report said, lost half its manufacturing blue-collar workers from 1967-82. And that's taken its toll on North Lawndale. According to federal, city and state records:

— Four of 10 people lived in poverty in 1980, an increase of a third over a decade earlier.

— One in five people was out of work in 1980. Unemployment, some activists say, may now be as

high as 30 per cent. — More than a third of the housing is uninhabitable or so deteriorated it's beyond rehabilitation.

— Eight of 10 children are born out of wedlock. The 1986 infant mortality rate, 27.2 per 1,000 live births, was more than 2.5 times the U.S. average.

Much of North Lawndale has simply vanished. Since 1960, more than half the residents, thousands of jobs and most industries have fled. Gangs are more vicious, drugs more common.

North Lawndale has blacked off block of weed-filled lots, gutted buildings and men in their prime who while away their days loitering on street corners, or huddled around fires in garbage cans.

Once a largely Jewish community with gray stone houses, stores, factories and banks, North Lawndale turned from white to mostly black in the 1950s. Absentee landlords and political neglect had contributed to its decline by 1966 when King moved into a \$90-a-month, third-floor flat, with inadequate heat and halls reeking of urine.

"Close to the poor"

"You can't really get close to the poor without living and being here with them," he said. King lived in the building, since torn down, on and off for several months that year.

He tried to fight slumlords, build tenant unions, end discrimination. He led open-housing marches in all-white neighbourhoods and tried to be peacemaker when riots flared in the summer of 1966.

King, folks say, brought hope to North Lawndale. His assassination brought destruction. Riots that tore apart U.S. cities after King's death in 1968 unleashed a storm of rage in the neighbourhood as well.

"The riots killed or... almost mortally wounded the hope of the community," said President Moody, executive vice president of the local Better Boys Foundation. "There was no Marshall Plan for this war-torn community. It was as if someone decided to let them sit there in the mess that they made and let them stew," he said. "The consequences have been devastating. The community has been damned from the

outside."

Today, North Lawndale has 61,000 residents, less than half the population of almost 125,000 in 1965. Much of the middle-class has fled.

Tens of thousands of jobs also disappeared. Seventy-five per cent of businesses were lost from 1960 to 1970.

The main shopping area remains a burned-out shell. A proposal by a national organisation of planners, builders, bankers and others to build a \$9.5-million shopping centre has been postponed.

The neighbourhood has some food and liquor stores, but to buy anything else, "you have to go to an area you're not wanted to spend your money," said Isabelle Burrell. "It's insulting."

Some businesses have stayed afloat. The Community Bank of Lawndale, which opened in 1977 with \$2 million in assets, now has \$25 million.

But Jim Hadley, senior vice president, said investors still question the neighbourhood's viability, despite its prime location and good transportation. A main reason is housing shortages. Only 727 units have been built since 1969, city officials say. Some government-subsidised housing has been built and almost \$7 million has been spent on improvements since 1983, they add.

"As long as you don't have any housing, you're not going to have desirable residents," said resident Edward Manning.

The business climate, however, seems like a minor problem compared with the drug dealing, gangs and violence.

Horror stories

Hampton, for example, a 30-year-old with three teen-agers and a baby, has survived four apartments and 14 years of horror stories: She's fended off giant rats slurping out of her toilet, been forced out by an arsonist, faced drug users shooting up in the hallway and seen murder victims,

attend the Democratic Party nominating convention in Atlanta in July. In the primaries and caucuses so far, Dukakis has the edge with an estimated 828 delegates. He is followed by Jackson with 720, Gore with 490, Illinois Senator Paul Simon with 180, and Gephardt with 167.

Suburban Athens bar bombed

ATHENS (R) — Four American military personnel injured in a bomb blast in an Athens bar were released after treatment at a U.S. military base hospital, police said Sunday. The bomb Saturday night injured 14 people and totally destroyed the bar Oscar, popular at weekends with off-duty American servicemen from a nearby U.S. military base. No one has claimed responsibility. Police said the 14 victims of the blast in the suburb of Glyfada included an 18-year-old British waitress. She and four Greeks remained in hospital, but doctors said they were all out of danger. Another 24-year-old Briton was treated for light injuries. "It was a miracle that we had no dead. The explosion was very strong and threw me away several metres from where I stood. It was total madness," said Theodore Arapakis, a customer.

WORLD NEWS BRIEFS

Soviet missile withdrawal completed

BERLIN (AP) — The removal of Soviet missiles stationed in East Germany was completed Saturday under the terms of the U.S.-Soviet treaty to eliminate intermediate-range nuclear missiles, the state-run news agency ADN reported. "The last train carrying Soviet missile troops and other equipment for operative-tactical missiles of the type OTR-22 (SS-12) left Saturday from Neubrandenburg," ADN said. Neubrandenburg is north of Berlin.

Dukakis wins Kansas caucuses

TOPEKA, Kansas (R) — Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis won the Kansas Democratic caucuses Saturday, defeating civil rights leader Jesse Jackson. With all 117 districts reporting, Dukakis had 283 delegates and Jackson 205. Tennessee Senator Albert Gore had 122 and Missouri Senator Richard Gephardt trailed with 12. A total of 768 delegates were chosen to attend district conventions on April 23, at which 26 delegates and eight alternates will be selected to

Statistics on black poverty

CHICAGO (AP) — Here are some statistics on black poverty in the United States and related issues:

Poverty:

— The national poverty rate for blacks in 1986 was 31.1 per cent, compared with 11 per cent for whites, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The poverty rate is based on those people whose income falls below a level determined by the U.S. government. The level is \$8,737 for a three-person family, and \$11,203 for a four-person family.

— In 1968, the year Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, the black poverty rate was 34.7 per cent, compared with 10 per cent for whites.

— The Midwest had the highest proportion of blacks living below the poverty line, 34.5 per cent, in 1986, according to the State of Black America, a series of reports published by the National Urban League.

Unemployment:

— The black unemployment rate in 1987 was 13 per cent, 2.5 times the 5.3 per cent for whites, the Census Bureau said.

— In 1968, before statistics were broken down for specific racial or ethnic groups, all minority unemployment was 6.7 per cent. The white jobless rate was 3.2 per cent.

Income:

— Median family income for blacks has increased every year since the recession-fuelled low point of 1982, the Urban League said. However, the average median black family income throughout the 1980s is

\$16,476, compared with \$17,765 for the 1970s. — In a single year, 1986, median black family income was \$17,604, compared with \$30,809 for whites. — In 1986, 44.2 per cent of black families had incomes of less than \$10,000, compared with 13.7 per cent of white families.

Children:

— In 1986, 42.7 per cent of all black children under 18 years of age were officially classified as poor. The comparable figure for white children was 15.3.

Cities:

— From 1970 to 1980, the number of people living below the poverty line in the cores of the nation's 10 largest cities increased by 19 per cent, from 3.1 million to 3.8 million, according to a University of Chicago study by Loic Wacquant and William Julius Wilson.

The increase, the study said, was due entirely to increased poverty among minorities. The cities measured were the largest as of 1970 — New York; Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, Baltimore, Dallas, Cleveland, Indianapolis, Los Angeles and Houston.

— In the 1970-80 decade, the number of poor people rose 30 per cent in Los Angeles, 24 per cent in Chicago, 20 per cent in New York City and 16 per cent in Philadelphia, the study said. — The proportion of blacks living in extremely poor neighbourhoods doubled in Chicago and tripled in New York City from 1970 to 1980.



American civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. with coworkers: If he returned to his old

Chicago neighbourhood, would he think his worst nightmare had come true? (File photo)